

The Ripline

www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/Union/BUHABS

Issue 5 2002/2003

Newsletter of the BRISTOL UNIVERSITY HOT AIR BALLOONING SOCIETY

As some of you may have noticed last week, we have been trying to make the most of the nice weather to get some mid-week flying in. The weather has been gorgeous for sitting outside, but sadly it's not been good for flying. The mornings have been really quite misty and sometimes foggy, and the visibility often hasn't improved until late morning. The wind has also been problematic at times, and the van has been in for its MOT. Please remember we fly right the way through the summer so if you haven't got up yet, please be persistent with signing up and you'll get lots of lovely flights in very soon! We keep a record of who signs up the most and we have to find a crew at short notice we tend to ring people who we know sign up lots first. At the moment, the top "signer-uppers" are: **Matthew French, John Dawson, Alice Chittock, Will Pyatt, Susan Springhall, Sarah Taylor, Alex Vickery and Stephen Daynes**, so well done!

The minutes of the AGM will be available shortly and my President's report is printed on page 2. Below is your lovely committee for next year as elected at the AGM.

We are planning several trips around the UK this summer. Watch this space, keep checking you're e-mail or drop me or Ellie an e-mail if you would be interested.

Hope you all have a good Easter holiday, there will be some holiday flying, drop Ellie an e-mail if you're around and interested in getting some flights in!

Hugo

Committee and AGM

PRESIDENT	HUGO WILLIAMS
TREASURER	NICOLA HETHERINGTON
SECRETARY	HANNAH STEER
TRANSPORT OFFICER & Membership Sec.	SIMON CHURCH
FLYING TREASURER & SENIOR PILOT	PAUL SPELLWARD
SOCIAL SECRETARY	MATTHEW FRENCH
WEBSITE EDITOR	PHIL HOOPER
RIPLINE EDITOR	PHIL SEMPLE
PILOTS	TIM DUDMAN
	SIMON JENKINS
	ELLIE FEARON (P.U.T)

Welcome to Hannah, Phil Semple and Matthew who are keen new members of the brilliant BUHABS committee! Hannah is a 1st Year Civil Engineer, Phil is doing Chemistry and is also in his first year and Matthew is a 2nd year Physicist.

I'll be handing Ripline over to Phil over the next few months. As always, Phil and I would love to have lots of articles, flight reviews, pictures and suggestions from any of you. They can be as long as a page, or just a couple of sentences. We'll consider them even if they're only slightly ballooning related!

Honorary Membership

At the AGM, LEE HOOPER was also elected an Honorary Member of BUHABS. For those of you who don't know Lee, he is a BUHABS Pilot and was President of the club for several years. You'll still meet Lee out flying with BUHABS, as he will be helping with Ellie's training, we also hope he will come along to our legendary pub crawls! His contribution to BUHABS over several years has been enormous and invaluable, and his honorary membership is well deserved. He will be flying a commercial balloon in and around Bristol this summer, a large brown one with the appropriate registration number G-ROSS!

President's Report to the Annual General Meeting.

It is with some nervousness that I deliver my first President's Report to a BUHABS AGM. I fear hecklers from such a large and uncontrollable mob of attendees. I regret to report, however, that neither Ellie or Nicola have been able to provide any BUHABS scandal this year, so I must move swiftly on to more mundane matters.

Since last year's AGM, BUHABS has had a successful summer season. At the beginning of the summer, we spent 10 days flying in Vermenton in central France. In August, we flew twice from the Bristol International Fiesta. Simon checked out in late summer to join the hallowed ranks of BUHABS active pilots. Several flights in the autumn term were followed by a couple of lovely flights in January, including a flight from the Icicle balloon meet on the first weekend of 2003. The weather has been disappointingly poor at times this year, however I am confident that, as soon as the weather improves our pilots and crew will be rearing to go.

After a rather tiring week at FRESH, BUHABS recruited approximately 80 members. Subsequent recruitment such as REFRESH and the usual trickle has brought this number up to nearly 100. We expect a few more as summer approaches, and are pleased with these numbers, however we are not complacent. We will continue to drive for more members and a new sponsorship deal to secure the club's long-term future.

Plans for this year centre on getting as many members as possible involved in the club. I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome members attending their first AGM. We have decided not to run a trip to Vermenton this year, to allow more weekend trips around the UK. We plan to attend Fiestas in Northampton and elsewhere, as well as the Bristol Fiesta in August. We hope as many members will come away on weekend trips with us as possible.

Ellie is progressing well with her training, and given a fair wind, or rather not, she might just check out before the next AGM. This will lead to a search for a new PUT, which should be an incentive for keen people to get involved over the summer.

Overall, this year should prove an exciting year for BUHABS; we have a motivated committee with lots of ideas. We will have important decisions to make in the near future, as the van and the balloon will need replacement in the next few years.

Finally, I would like to thank all the members of the committee who have pulled together and worked hard for the love of BUHABS. I think we work well as a team and I look forward to welcoming some new committee members later this evening.

Here's to lots of pretty flights and exciting drag landings through cow poo!

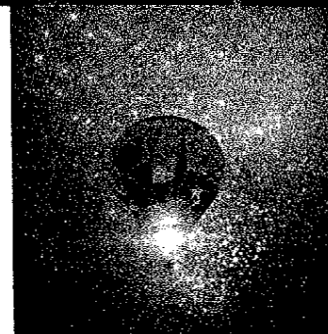
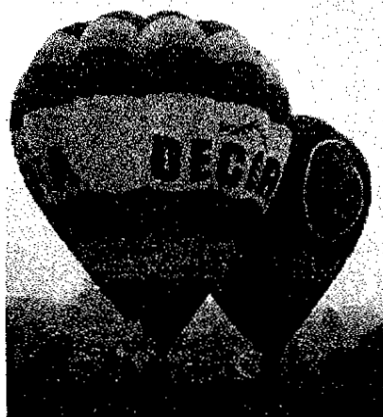
Hugo Williams
BUHABS President 2002-2003

Socials and Website!

Aside from the important business discussed at the AGM, we also headed off for a delicious curry and a few drinks afterwards! Much fun was had by all. Our new Social Secretary, Matthew, will no doubt be organising some more socials as summer approaches so we hope to see you there. Some pictures from the Christmas social are now available on the website www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/Union/BUHABS. Most of them are embarrassing ones of me so if you want to have a good laugh...

In addition to hideously embarrassing photos of various committee members, the website has loads of interesting

ballooning related stuff. We have photos of the current balloon flying around Bristol, Bath and elsewhere. There are also some photos of past balloons (left). If you're interested in the Bristol Balloon Fiesta in August you can see some lovely pictures from last year's event (right). There are also some interesting articles about some more unusual flying, including flying in the Alps and the "splash and dash".



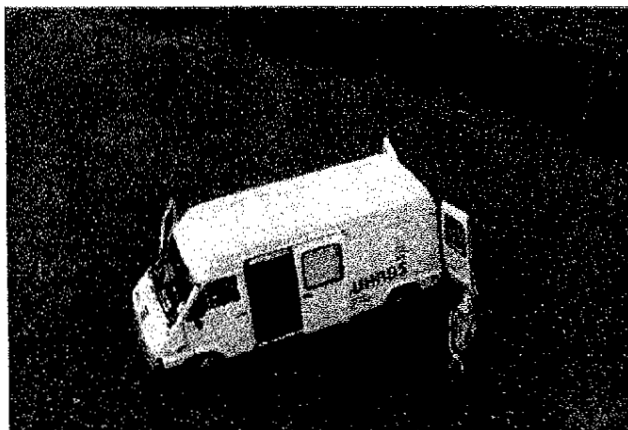
FLIGHT REPORT—15th February 2003.

To be perfectly honest with you, due to my substandard organisation, the day did not get off to the best start! As it was agreed that we would meet Lee in the Bath railway field at 8.00am, a 7.10am phone-in would always be cutting it a bit fine! My praise, however, has to go out to Dave Shatford, who not only volunteers himself regularly to drive, but can also be out of bed and ready to leave in 5 minutes! Dave and I rushed to the compound where the van decided to have a stop before it eventually started, setting my perfect schedule adrift and leaving some very keen members shivering outside the Union!

Amazingly we didn't arrive much later than planned, although I suspect Lee, and Dave Groombridge and his crew, who were flying another balloon, would disagree! It was a chilly morning and I was very glad of my rather fetching thermals! :-)

Initially there were worries about wind speed but after we launched a couple of "met" balloons (i.e. party balloons) and made some last minute calls to the Airmet weather information service, it was decided we should go for it, even if it meant only a short hop.

In fact it turned out to be a 50 minute flight to Newton-St-Loe which was great! I learnt a



The not-so-lovely BUHABS van has finally passed its MOT this week. One of the committee's priorities this year is to look at the possibility of replacing the van with a more reliable and flexible retrieve vehicle.

lot on the flight, the most interesting being the effect of a shear layer on a balloon and Lee demonstrated how this can be handled. (A shear layer is where there is a sudden change in wind speed with height—Ed.) The passengers also experienced the delights of my not-always-so-fabulous steep descents before we finally landed in a suitably muddy field. It so happened that Lee had landed on the same land before, so whilst he went to increase the farmer's BUHABS mug collection, the balloon was deflated and packed away, during which my landing capabilities were unjustly criticised. Some people are never satisfied! >:-|

After packing away we headed off to Keynsham for a greasy breakfast (and by greasy I mean literally dripping) and a chance for everyone to fill in their logbooks.

All the passengers who flew were previously ballooning virgins and they all had a fantastic time. I would like to appeal to everyone to persist with signing up as summer approaches; I look forward to flying with you soon (if you're brave enough ;-)!)

Ellie

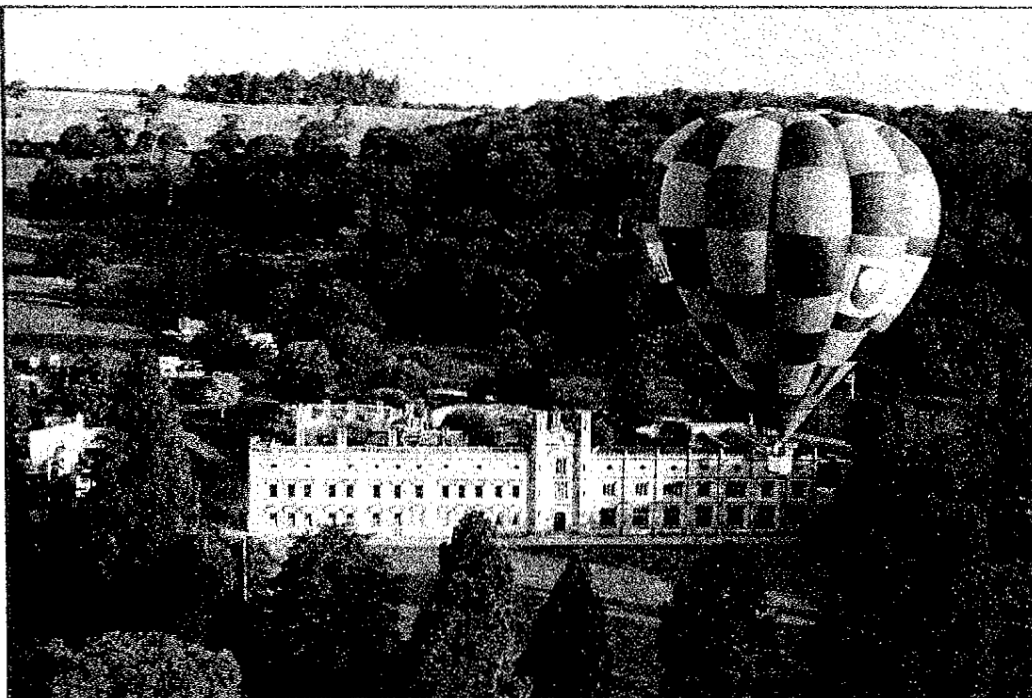
FLIGHT CREW:

Lee Hooper
Ellie Fearon
Stephen Daynes
Jim Liddle
A. Zaki M. Afifi

GROUND CREW:

Dave Shatford
Matthew French

Our current balloon, BUHABS 5, has recently been featured in a greetings card! Tim is convinced it is him flying from the Balloon Fiesta last year. The country house in the background is Ashton Court, our regular Bristol launch site. B5 was also seen on the Holiday programme on BBC 1 in January!



And Finally..... New Rules of the Air 2003

By Professor B.J. Brinkworth (edited by Ellie Fearon)

- RULE 1: If it is not too windy, it will be too wet to fly.
- RULE 2: If it not too windy or too wet, it will be too unstable to fly.
- RULE 3: If it is not too wet, too windy or too unstable, the visibility will be too low to fly.
- RULE 4: If it is not too wet, too windy, too unstable or too foggy to fly, then you will have unbreakable commitments elsewhere.
- RULE 5: If it is calm, dry, stable, warm, clear and you are available then the BUHABS van will be in pieces on a garage floor.

I think we all know the feeling...